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MONTANA LABOR MARKET

Monthly Review of
EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK, LABOR SUPPLY, LABOR DEMAND, CURRENT EMPLOYMENT

MONTANA STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
Division of Unemployment Compensation Commission of Montana

James J. Flaherty, Commissioner

Edgar H. Reeder, Chairman
UCC Building—P. O. Box 1728—Helena, Montana

Charles Luedke, Commissioner

FL. 275

ARTCRAFT PRINTERS BOZEMAN, MONTANA

MARCH, 1967

Montana Economy Wintered Well; Another Record Employment Year Shaping Up . . .

Non-Farm Jobs in Upswing—Aided by fairly mild weather conditions throughout most of the state, non-farm employment in Montana came through the winter months at the highest levels ever recorded for a winter season. The year started out with 180,400 workers on non-farm payrolls, 5,900 above the January 1966 employment figure. A moderate monthly seasonal decline of 1,900 left a February non-farm job total of 178,500 up 4,200 from the same month a year ago. Record breaking non-farm employment totals which highlighted every month of 1966 combined to bring the 1966 employment average to 185,400. This was 3,200 higher than the 1965 average. Employment in all major industry groups is now edging upward and should advance briskly as the spring work season begins in earnest by April 1st. It is expected that 200,000 workers will be on non-farm payrolls when employment reaches a peak later this year. The 1966 peak came in July with 195,500 workers on payrolls of industry and commerce.

Four Groups Post Good Gains from 1966 — Employment in four industry groups was up substantially this February from the same month a year ago. Heading the list was government where employment was up by 3,700 to a total of 49,400. The major share, 1,900 was at the federal level with expanding programs connected to the war on poverty accounting for some of this increment. Employment in manufacturing industries

exceeded last year by 1,700 workers. There were 1,500 more jobs in the durable goods group, and a moderate 200 in the non-durable goods segment of the industry. In the durable goods category, employment in lumber manufacturing was up 400, primary metals, up 500, and fabricated metal and machinery, up 600. An expanding trade industry had 900 more workers this February than last. Employment in finance, insurance, and real estate firms rose by 200 from last year. Moderate declines from a year ago occurred in construction, down 300; mining, down 200; and transportation, communications and utilities, down 100. February employment in the service industries, at 25,500, did not change from last year.

Good Construction Volume Ahead — A good agenda of heavy and building construction projects will play a major role in providing new jobs in the busy work season just ahead. The Libby Dain work force is now near the 600 mark and will continue to expand as the season advances. Nearly 700 men are working on the addition to the aluminum plant at Columbia Falls. Another expansion project is also planned there. A \$3.5 million oil refinery expansion project is underway at Laurel. Add to these interstate highway work, new supermarkets, motels, educational buildings, hospitals, retirement homes, and home building for an extremely active construction season this year.

Other Prospects Good—Thousands of additional workers will be added to other industry payrolls in the next few months. The opening of national parks, resort areas, irrigation services, and forest service facilities will create a good demand for workers. Main street employment in trade and service firms will rise to meet the demands of the summer season. On the farm front, some worker shortages are already evident.

New Commissioner for the UCC — Charles Luedke, a Billings attorney, is the newest member of Montana's Unemployment Compensation Commission. He joins Chairman Edgar H. Reeder, now starting his seventh year as Chairman and Executive Director, and Commissioner James J. Flaherty of Great Falls, to make the three member board. Luedke replaces Rex F. Hibbs, also of Billings, who resigned when he was elected as Senator from Yellowstone County on last November 8th. Luedke's appointment will run until March 3, 1969.

Thirty Years of Service—The Montana UCC observed its 30th anniversary of service to Montana on March 16, 1967. The Montana UCC law was signed by Governor Roy E. Ayers on March 16, 1937. The first UCC check was written on July 22, 1939. Since that time more than \$121 million in jobless benefits has been paid to eligible, unemployed workers, to help sustain purchasing power and bolster the economy.

LABOR TURNOVER RATES IN MANUFACTURING AND MINING INDUSTRIES

(per 100 employees)

(Compiled in cooperation with U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)

INDUSTRY	ACCESSION RATE						SEPARATION RATE					
	Total			New Hire			Total			Quit		
	Jan. 1967	Dec. 1966	Jan. 1967	Jan. 1967	Dec. 1966	Jan. 1967	Jan. 1967	Dec. 1966	Jan. 1967	Jan. 1967	Dec. 1966	Jan. 1967
All Manufacturing	4.2	3.6	4.3	3.9	3.0	3.6	3.8	3.9	3.9	1.9	2.1	1.9
Durable Goods	4.9	3.8	5.0	4.5	3.2	4.4	4.4	3.9	4.3	2.1	2.2	2.0
Primary Metal	4.9	7.1	4.3	4.2	5.4	3.4	4.7	4.0	2.9	2.2	2.7	1.6
Nondurable Goods	2.1	3.1	2.9	2.0	2.7	2.2	2.5	4.0	3.2	1.5	1.9	1.8
All Mining	7.5	9.8	7.4	3.5	4.5	2.2	6.3	5.5	7.6	2.2	2.1	3.4
Metal Mining	6.6	8.5	5.5	3.8	2.4	1.5	11.5	6.7	5.4	2.1	2.3	3.0

* Less than .05

Along the Hiring Line— Field Summary for Feb.

ANACONDA, Deer Lodge, Philipsburg — Labor market activity paced by increased smelter hiring, with employment in this industry up nearly 600 from last year to a total of near 2,400. Generally favorable weather allowed better than normal trends in outdoor work. Main street employment holds well but new hiring mostly for replacements.

BILLINGS, Columbus, Hardin, Laurel, Red Lodge, Roundup — Mild weather augured well for job prospects in the construction field. Work in progress includes \$18 million steam plant, \$4½ million storm sewer project, \$½ million financial building, and smaller commercial building and remodeling work. Passive trends noted in transportation and trade industry groups prior to spring upturn. Completion of sugar beet refining operations at Billings and Hardin idled 450 workers in a campaign that ran a month longer than usual.

BOZEMAN, ENNIS, Three Forks, Trident — Relatively good employment trends dominated the late winter season. Construction employment kept at high levels throughout the winter season. Contracts for two large commercial buildings to be let later. Logging fared well during winter season with worker shortages at times. Re-opening of West Yellowstone stud mill recalls 40 mill hands. Farm labor demand edging up gradually.

BUTTE, Virginia City, Whitehall — Area economy exhibited good strength throughout the winter months. Seasonal job layoffs below past years. Building construction maintained good employment forces for the winter season. Trade and service employment at seasonal par with little new hiring occurring. Shortages of experienced underground miners persists with recruitment efforts not too successful.

CUT BANK — Slim job prospects existed during February due to severity of weather conditions. Outdoor work was at near standstill, with construction and oil fields most affected. Little change noted in main street hiring trends. Farm labor demand chiefly for livestock care and sheep shearing.

DILLON — Construction activity dominated the late winter season employment picture. Projects in progress include supermarket, college dormitory, finish work on irrigation canal, and home building.

MONTANA CIVILIAN WORK FORCE

(In Thousands)

	Feb. 67	Jan. 67	Feb. 66	Jan. 67 to Feb. 67	Feb. 66 to Feb. 67
Civilian Work Force	247.1	246.1	245.2	1.0	1.9
Total Employment	231.4	231.8	228.5	.4	2.9
Total Non-Agricultural Employment	203.9	205.7	202.0	-1.8	1.9
(Non-agricultural Wage & Salary)	178.5	180.4	172.6	-1.9	5.9
Total Agricultural Employment	27.5	26.1	26.5	1.4	1.0
Labor Management Disputes	*	*	.1	—	.1
Total Unemployment	15.7	14.3	16.6	1.4	—
Percent Unemployment	6.4	5.8	6.8	—	—
U. S. Unemployment Rate	NA	4.2	4.2	—	—
• Less than 50					

Work on \$840,000 college building should start in earnest during April. Demand for farm and ranch workers fairly active with wage ranges of \$150 to \$200 monthly plus keep.

GLASGOW, Fort Peck, Malta, Opheim — Job hiring declined seasonally from January but February employment trends this year show some improvement over last year. Some jobs opened up in trade industries as replacements for wives of military personnel transferred from the air base. Slight upturn noted in farm hiring.

GLENDIVE, Circle, Wibaux — Bad weather, inactive trends in construction and oil fields kept employment prospects at bare minimum during February. Interstate river bridge main construction project with few hires noted. Slow business caused layoffs of oil field company workers. Signs of spring noted in opening of roadside drive-in, employing three. Farm labor supply ample at present mostly for livestock care and hay hauling.

GREAT FALLS, Choteau, Fort Benton, Stanford — The number of registered jobseekers up 25% from last year but new claims for jobless benefits remained the same. Trade industries provided the main hiring impetus during the month. Construction failed to show any appreciable advance despite fairly good weather conditions. Farm labor trends on the slow side; sheep shearing postponed until March.

HAMILTON, Stevensville — Little construction work plus slowdown in logging and mill operations kept labor market activity at minimum. Some lumber industry workers leaving area to search work elsewhere. Main street hiring trends at seasonal low. Farm labor demand chiefly for potato cellar workers and general farm hands.

HAVRE, Chinook, Harlem — After normal winter slowdown, employment should soon be on the rise in construction, trade, railroads, and agriculture. Upcoming construction projects include \$310,000 contract for remodeling radar station complex, and more than \$½ million in building at Northern Montana College. Gradual uptrend in farm hiring seen for March.

HELENA, Boulder, Garrison, Townsend, White Sulphur Springs — Labor demand was slow in nearly all industry groups during the month. Temporary demand for clerical workers resulted in 40 job placements. Work on new \$3.5 million hospital on schedule with a crew of twenty men. Work on a \$1 million senior citizens apartment complex should be underway in April. Unusually slow trends in trade should improve with spring buying season. Farm labor demand fairly good.

KALISPELL, Columbia Falls, Whitefish — Several major construction projects had favorable effect on labor market. Start of work on aluminum plant expansion employed 325 by months end; work force expected to exceed 500 in March. Constant demand existed for woods workers with logging operations at capacity. Post holiday slump in trade volume reduced hiring.

LEWISTOWN, Harlowton, Ryegate, Winnett — Industry hiring shows good uptrend over year ago due to mild, open winter. On the other hand, farm labor demand fell 50% from last year with scarce demand for livestock feeders. A few manufacturing layoffs occurred, offset by increase construction hires.

LIBBY — Work on Libby Dam, commercial and private building projects kept construction activity at a good pace. Employment totals will rise monthly as weather clears. Good demand seen for construction, logging, and sawmill workers as season advances.

NINE YEARS OF MONTANA INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT TOTALS BY MONTHS (in Thousands)

	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Aver.
1956	156.6	154.4	156.3	163.0	169.3	177.4	177.4	179.8	177.2	174.6	170.4	166.7	168.6
1957	156.8	155.0	156.8	161.3	166.0	172.0	174.2	174.2	170.8	167.4	163.2	159.9	164.8
1958	153.1	150.3	150.5	156.4	162.4	167.1	170.2	172.2	170.0	168.8	165.8	162.4	162.4
1959	155.3	153.2	155.9	162.2	167.5	174.0	177.5	179.2	169.9	165.6	161.5	159.4	165.1
1960	152.7	152.5	156.1	163.5	168.4	175.8	176.9	177.7	174.8	171.6	167.5	164.5	166.8
1961	156.9	154.8	156.1	160.2	165.1	173.3	176.0	178.1	176.8	172.4	169.0	166.2	167.1
1962	158.3	158.2	159.6	166.2	172.4	180.1	180.5	181.2	178.6	176.6	175.1	173.5	171.7
1963	163.9	163.0	165.0	170.2	175.1	181.0	182.3	183.8	181.5	179.7	176.6	173.6	174.6
1964	166.2	164.3	165.1	169.1	174.2	182.4	185.5	187.2	184.9	182.2	178.4	175.4	176.2
1965	167.9	167.4	168.9	174.4	179.8	188.7	189.6	192.1	189.9	188.1	185.3	183.6	181.3
1966	173.9	172.6	174.2	179.3	184.2	194.0	196.4	196.2	191.9	189.8	185.5	185.9	185.4
1967	180.4	178.5*											

* Preliminary Estimate

LIVINGSTON, Big Timber — Worker demand most noticeable in trade establishments. Interior work on new high school in progress. Shortage of timber fallers continued throughout the month but little demand for mill hands. Good demand existed for livestock feeders, calvers, and farm couples.

MILES CITY, Baker, Ekalaka, Broadus, Jordan, Terry — Extremely light labor demand existed during February. Few job opportunities noted in trade and agricultural activities. Work on three building projects kept on schedule but no new hiring evident. Seasonal job upswing should begin late March.

MISSOULA, Drummond, Arlee, Superior — Job hiring in February increased by 29% from January with the most significant gains in sales and manufacturing occupations. Good uptrend noted in demand for lumber mill workers. Trade and service employment coasting along seasonal lines until spring buying season begins. Logging operations will be temporarily stalled by road conditions and load limits.

POLSON — Job placements down substantially from last year due chiefly to instability of lumber market. Some upswing expected in March when mill hiring will increase. Job trends in construction, trade, and agriculture at seasonally low ebb.

SHELBY — Job trends were quiet during the month with reduced activity in construction, oil fields, and agriculture. Some workers leaving area for employment in other states. Little change expected in employment picture next 30 days.

SIDNEY — Local office traffic reduced substantially from last month and last year as weather allowed many workers to remain on jobs part of each week. Job placements not too active but on par with 1966 totals. Farm labor demand on the slow side.

THOMPSON FALLS, Hot Springs — Job placements show big drops from last month and last year with weather conditions chiefly responsible. Some logging operations forced to shut down but most mill employment on steady schedules. Except for logging, March employment outlook for most industries more favorable.

WOLF POINT, Plentywood, Scobey — Home building comprised bulk of construction activity during February. Little change noted in main street employment levels but increased activity expected in cafes, implement firms, and grain elevators during March. Farm hiring mostly for livestock care; grain farms will need workers by end of March.

(1) Estimates include all full and part-time wage and salary workers who worked or received pay during the pay period ending nearest the 15th of the month. Proprietors, firm members, personnel of the armed forces, domestic servants, and self-employed persons are excluded.

(2) Preliminary estimates based on return from samples of 741 selected Montana establishments.

(3) Figures previously released have been revised on return from 1,130 such establishments.

(4) Includes fabricated metal products, machinery except electrical, furniture, stone and clay products.

ESTIMATED EMPLOYMENT IN NON-AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES IN MONTANA (1)

(Compiled in co-operation with United States Bureau of Labor Statistics)

INDUSTRY	EMPLOYMENT			Net Change	
	Feb. 1967 (2)	Jan. 1967 (3)	Feb. 1966	Jan. '67 to Feb. '67	Feb. '66 Against Feb. '67
NON-AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES	178,500	180,400	172,600	-1,900	5,900
Manufacturing	23,400	24,000	21,700	-600	1,700
Durable goods	15,600	15,600	14,100	00	1,500
Lumber and timber products	9,000	9,000	8,600	00	400
Primary metals	4,200	4,200	3,700	00	500
Other (4)	2,400	2,400	1,800	00	600
Nondurable goods	7,800	8,400	7,600	-600	200
Food and kindred products	4,000	4,600	3,900	-600	100
Printing and publishing	1,800	1,700	1,700	100	100
Petroleum refining	1,000	1,000	1,000	00	00
Other (5)	1,000	1,100	1,000	-100	00
Mining	7,300	7,300	7,500	00	-200
Metal mining	4,900	4,900	4,900	00	00
Coal, quarrying and nonmetallic	1,000	1,000	1,000	00	00
Petroleum-natural gas production	1,400	1,400	1,600	00	-200
Contract Construction	7,300	7,500	7,600	-200	-300
Contractors, building construction	2,100	2,200	2,200	-100	-100
Contractors, other than building	2,400	2,500	2,000	-100	400
Contractors, special trade	2,800	2,800	3,400	00	-600
Transportation and utilities	16,800	16,700	16,900	100	-100
Interstate railroads	7,200	7,000	7,200	200	00
Transportation except railroads	3,700	3,800	3,800	-100	-100
Utilities including communication	5,900	5,900	5,900	00	00
Trade	41,600	42,400	40,700	-800	900
Wholesale trade	8,900	9,200	8,600	-300	300
Retail trade	32,700	33,200	32,100	-500	600
General merchandise and apparel	6,000	6,400	5,800	-400	200
Food stores	4,900	5,000	5,300	-100	-400
Eating and drinking establishments	8,200	8,200	7,800	00	400
Automotive and filling stations	6,700	6,700	6,900	00	-200
Retail trade not elsewhere classified	6,900	6,900	6,300	00	600
Finance, insurance and real estate	7,200	7,300	7,000	-100	200
Services and miscellaneous	25,500	25,800	25,500	-300	00
Hotels, rooming houses, camps, etc.	2,800	3,000	2,800	-200	00
Personal services	2,200	2,200	2,200	00	00
Other (6)	20,500	20,600	20,500	-100	00
Government	49,400	49,400	45,700	00	3,700
Federal	13,100	13,100	11,200	00	1,900
State and local	36,300	36,300	34,500	00	1,800
Great Falls Area (Cascade County)	23,700	23,800	22,100	-100	1,600
Manufacturing	4,100	4,100	3,400	00	700
Contract construction	2,000	2,100	1,700	-100	300
Transportation and utilities	2,100	2,100	2,100	00	00
Trade, wholesale and retail	5,900	5,900	5,600	00	300
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	1,300	1,300	1,300	00	00
Services and miscellaneous (7)	3,700	3,700	3,700	00	00
Government	4,600	4,600	4,300	00	300
Billings Area (Yellowstone County)	25,600	25,600	24,000	00	1,600
Manufacturing	3,100	3,100	2,700	00	400
Contract construction	1,600	1,600	1,200	00	400
Transportation and Utilities	2,600	2,500	2,500	100	100
Trade, wholesale and retail	7,700	7,800	7,600	-100	100
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	1,400	1,400	1,400	00	00
Services and Miscellaneous (7)	5,000	5,000	4,500	00	500
Government	4,200	4,200	4,100	00	100

(5) Includes apparel, chemicals, and miscellaneous manufacturing products.

(6) Includes commercial trade schools, auto repair services and garages, miscellaneous repair services and hand trades, motion pictures, amusements and recreation, medical

and health, law offices and professional services, non-profit membership organizations and businesses not otherwise classified.

(7) Same as (6) above. Also includes hotels, rooming houses, camps, personal services and mitting.

COMPARISON OF BASIC LABOR MARKET ACTIVITIES IN FEBRUARY, 1967 AND FEBRUARY, 1966

Employment Service Office	New Job Applicants				Jobseekers In File				Job Placements						UI Claims*			
	Feb. 1967		Feb. 1966		Feb. 1967		Feb. 1966		Feb. 1967			Feb. 1966			Wk.	End	3-3	
	Tot.	Vet.	Tot.	Vet.	Tot.	Vet.	Tot.	Vet.	Ind.	Ag.	Tot.	Vet.	Ind.	Ag.	Tot.	Vet.	1966	1965
Anaconda	186	69	151	25	259	86	268	54	152	20	172	55	66	7	73	12	143	164
Billings	532	162	596	129	2,663	849	2,975	790	336	66	402	128	315	66	381	121	1,666	1,733
Bozeman	130	35	131	26	543	140	496	136	108	14	122	22	132	15	147	10	296	331
Butte	310	104	381	65	1,037	303	1,316	123	115	42	239	7	246	42	460	628	626	830
Cut Bank	60	18	58	18	445	172	680	188	9	31	40	19	5	98	103	18	326	122
Dillon	42	12	67	27	178	47	177	56	17	44	61	28	17	52	69	34	106	122
Glasgow	12	11	34	4	261	39	301	21	61	8	39	12	46	3	49	5	183	211
Glendive	40	9	62	7	263	44	285	41	12	10	22	3	20	17	37	6	163	181
Great Falls	610	168	656	104	2,307	703	1,806	343	251	75	326	84	386	124	610	86	1,391	1,235
Hamilton	39	9	44	8	295	82	326	72	11	9	20	6	19	5	24	7	210	243
Havre	64	18	64	2	278	82	331	77	26	15	41	15	43	32	75	14	231	236
Helena	175	39	177	35	764	267	472	135	105	13	118	20	115	20	135	38	551	437
Kalispell	208	65	240	35	1,169	383	1,525	409	89	5	94	27	112	7	149	19	861	918
Lewistown	61	12	70	12	237	65	328	72	43	37	80	23	21	48	60	6	189	251
Libby	57	19	446	152	...	...	24	...	21	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	414	323
Livingston	66	8	64	6	361	73	415	72	41	17	68	21	31	4	38	6	265	275
Miles City	38	12	67	9	170	59	248	42	15	9	24	8	40	13	53	6	178	200
Missoula	472	136	476	74	1,418	469	1,586	327	244	13	257	80	309	13	322	43	785	721
Polson	104	13	102	16	368	116	318	81	10	4	14	7	88	9	97	25	239	198
Shelby	42	23	47	9	211	90	255	82	14	8	22	1	18	97	115	14	189	201
Sidney	47	8	85	22	121	36	320	68	22	10	32	7	23	7	30	5	99	262
Thompson Falls	26	11	42	4	235	70	213	42	10	...	10	3	31	...	31	14	164	129
Wolf Point	32	14	35	3	247	103	379	79	12	5	17	6	21	2	23	2	158	248
Billings YOC	228	7	216	...	587	32	671	...	79	1	80	6	106	...	166	...	...	...
TOTALS	3,701	972	3,908	640	14,813	4,562	15,556	3,310	1,796	414	2,210	627	2,296	646	2,912	535	9,269	9,783

*Includes 680 claims of the Fed. UC Program 881 same a year ago.

AVERAGE HOURS AND EARNINGS IN SELECTED MONTANA INDUSTRIES

(Produced in co-operation with United States Bureau of Labor Statistics)

(Hours and earnings data exclude administrative and salaried personnel)

INDUSTRY	Average Weekly Earnings			Average Weekly Hours			Average Hourly Earnings		
	Feb. (1) 1967	Jan. (2) 1967	Feb. 1966	Feb. (1) 1967	Jan. (2) 1967	Feb. 1966	(Feb. (1) 1967	Jan. (2) 1967	Feb. 1966
All Manufacturing	120.17	118.69	115.30	39.4	39.3	40.6	3.05	3.02	2.84
Durable Goods	120.29	117.41	115.79	39.7	39.4	41.8	3.03	2.98	2.77
Primary Metal	119.39	119.69	113.88	40.2	40.3	40.1	2.97	2.97	2.84
Non-durable Goods	118.73	120.51	114.00	38.8	39.0	37.5	3.06	3.09	3.04
Food and Kindred Products	109.48	110.43	97.84	40.4	40.6	37.2	2.71	2.72	2.63
All Mining	132.11	132.03	120.05	40.4	40.5	38.6	3.27	3.26	3.11
Metal Mining	127.14	127.47	116.00	39.0	39.1	37.3	3.26	3.26	3.11
Transportation and Utilities (except Rys.)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Transportation (except railroads)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Utilities and Communications	121.48	116.43	116.22	39.7	38.3	39.8	3.06	3.04	2.92

(1) Preliminary estimates. (2) Figures previously released have been revised on more complete returns.

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